

IMPERIAL RELATIONS

An address by Henri Bourassa, Esq.,
before the Empire Club of Canada,
TORONTO, MARCH 6, 1913.

"LE DEVOIR" PRINTING
71a St. James St.,
MONTREAL.

Gen. J. H. ...
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This vast problem of Imperial relationship is one of very old standing, but with no finality. It is as old as the first days when a few individuals of the British races, abandoning the small islands to the north of Europe, went to foreign parts and brought with them their instincts, aspirations and national inheritance. It is still in the process of evolution, largely because, with people of British races, slower perhaps in their national development than the Latin races have been, but never prepared to stop on the road of progress towards the attainment of their ideal, there is no finality in the development of political institutions. In that process of evolution, if you and we, English and French Canadians, want to accomplish something of real bearing for the whole Empire, if we want to build something enduring in our part of the Empire, we must agree from the start on one point: that every Canadian, whatever his race or language, shall be allowed the most absolute freedom in expressing his opinion upon all the aspects of this great question.

Before we decide, as a people, what changes should be made in the existing relations between Canada and the Motherland, and the other parts of the Empire, is it not well that we should stop for a moment and not give ourselves altogether to blind sentiment? Eloquent and easy appeals are frequently made to the solidarity of the British races. More latitude should be given, I think, to the voice of reason. This great problem must be considered not only from the point of view of the

British, but also from the broader and more complex viewpoint of all the citizens of Canada and the Empire.

What is the British Empire? It is all very well to applaud the word; it is all very well to rejoice in the feeling of pride which the expression evokes in our minds; but really, have you ever seriously put that basic question to yourselves?

WHAT IS THE BRITISH EMPIRE ?

It is no unity of Government, it is no unity of institutions, it is no unity of territory. It is, on the contrary, a very complex conglomeration of lands, of races, of institutions and governments.

You have, first of all, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the only sovereign portion of the British Empire, the only British community possessing and enjoying all the rights of British citizenship. In fact, the government and people of the British Isles own the rest of the Empire; they make the policy of the Empire; they decide, for the Empire, all questions of peace and war; they make and unmake all the international relations of the Empire.

Then, at a much lower stage of national development and political liberty, you have the self-governing colonies with their twenty odd millions of people, enjoying, within their respective territories, most of the rights and privileges of British citizenship, but deprived of all those rights and privileges the moment they step out from the three miles of sea water surrounding their portion of the Empire.

Then comes the mighty Empire of India, with its 315 million souls, with its forty different languages, codes of civil law, etc., possessed also by the people of Great Britain and Ireland, administered by one of the departments of the British government, over which the seven millions of people of Canada have no more to say than the inhabitants of any foreign land.

Finally, you have the numerous Crown Colonies and Protectorates, also the exclusive possession of the peo-

ple of Great Britain and Ireland, and administered by another department of the British government.

So, when we speak of the Empire as a "galaxy of nations", when we refer to the "association between the Mother Country and the Daughter States", it is splendid phraseology for after-dinner speeches; but really, it is a very false definition of the Empire.

In order to realise the enormous difference in citizenship, as between the people of the United Kingdom and the people of Canada, not to speak of the rest of the Empire, let us look into some of the features of our system of government.

LIMITATIONS OF COLONIAL SELF GOVERNMENT

Even in that sphere in which I have just stated that we enjoy the same privileges, the same rights of self-government as belong to the people of the United Kingdom, there is a good deal of limitation, over our action, which does not exist over the action of the British Parliament and government.

For example, there is no finality in our Courts of Appeal. Any citizen of Canada, in certain cases, can be brought before the Privy Council of England, an admirable institution in itself, but whose members are nominated by a government under the authority of a Parliament over which the seven millions of people of Canada have no control to exercise, directly or indirectly.

As regards copyright, we have to humbly submit to the legislation of the British Parliament, elected by the people of Great Britain and Ireland, before we can grant to foreign authors protection for their works in Canada, or before we can secure for Canadian authors in foreign countries the safeguard of their intellectual production.

Take the question of extradition and criminal law. Our tribunals are deprived by British legislation from punishing any crime committed by a Canadian outside of the territory of Canada.

Now, take a very important question, the question of shipping trade and navigation. On repeated occasions, the representatives of Canada, as those of Australia and New Zealand, have petitioned, have requested, have demanded from the British government the power to legislate, either upon foreign trade coming to Canada, or upon Canadian trade travelling on the high seas. Even as late as 1911,—at the sixth of those Imperial conferences of which we are told that they have accomplished so much to bring about equality of rights and privileges between the Motherland and the "Sister Nations",—that power and that right were flatly denied by the British government. So, at the present time, when we speak of our mercantile navy, do you know that every ship belonging to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, every ship belonging to the Canadian Northern, or to the Allan Line, or to the Reford Agency, built up partly with Canadian capital, manned partly with Canadian sailors, and transporting largely Canadian trade, have no status of their own on the high seas and cannot be reached by our legislation? They are British ships, registered in Great Britain, controlled by British legislation. All their carrying trade on the high seas is counted in the annuals of Great Britain as forming the magnificent bulky figure, of British sea-going trade.

NATURALISATION

Now let us look into another question, that of naturalisation—a very important one in our stage of development. We are going abroad, not wisely perhaps, but as a matter of fact, our governments have sent agents abroad, paid by the people of Canada, inviting the foreigners of all lands to come and settle with us. We have invited the German; we have invited the Scandinavian, the Russian, the Austrian, the French, the Italian, the Belgian, and so on.

They have come to this country and settled here; many have taken from Canadian tribunals their letters

of naturalisation; they have been living with us for years; under our Canadian Militia Act, they are liable to be called to arms; they are now on the point of being taxed by the Canadian Government in order to help in the maintenance of the British Navy. But while, by virtue of those letters of naturalisation, they have been made subject to all the burdens of British citizenship in Canada, they are denied by the British Parliament every right of British citizenship outside of Canada.

If to-morrow the British Empire were at war, and Canada attacked by a foreign foe, what would be the position of those hundreds of thousands of people whom we have made Canadians? Under a solemn oath, they have renounced their nationality; but the British Parliament denies us the right to give them British nationality. They are subject to our Militia Act, but the moment they step out from the three mile limit, not being British subjects, they fall under the heavy penalties of the military laws of their respective countries, and, in case of war, would be treated as deserters. If forced to enrol in the Canadian militia, and made prisoners by the forces of their native country, they would be shot both as traitors and deserters!

Let me give you another example, which shows in a more ludicrous way the absurdity of that situation. Take the case of Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, or that of Sir William Van Horne, both American born. They have come to this country; they have helped in their way in the development of Canada; they have become captains of trade, finance and industry in this country. I presume they have acquired their rights as Canadian voters long ago; but unless they go and live continuously for five years on the soil of England, Scotland or Ireland, they are no more British subjects today than when living in the neighbouring Republic. You have heard that the Government is contemplating the nomination of a Canadian delegate to the Imperial Defence Committee. A name has been mentioned, that of the Honorable Mr. Perley, minister without portfolio in the Bor-

den cabinet. Do you know that, in the eyes of the British law, because of the obstinacy with which the British government refuses to give us the right to make British subjects in Canada, Mr. Perley is today an American citizen? If he goes and represents us in the so-called Councils of the Empire, "loyal" Canada will be represented in England by an American citizen! The idea is, I presume, to give Mr. Perley a chance of becoming a British subject; but he must remain five years abroad; there must be no change of government here; because, if he comes back at the end of four years and eleven months, he is still an American citizen!

GOVERNMENT OF THE EMPIRE

These are limitations upon our action as a self-governing colony, upon our powers of legislation in our own country. If we go beyond that sphere, if we cross over the fence of our nursery, what do we find? That the British flag floats over a more extensive area of land than was ever gathered under one human power in any known period of history. We take pride in that. But with the government, the administration, the laws, the protection of those vast and numerous territories, containing 350 million souls, all British subjects, we Canadians have no more to say and no more to do than the Lascars of India or the Zulus of Matabeleland. They are under the exclusive control of two departments of the British government, at the head of which are a couple of gentlemen representing constituencies either of England, Scotland, Wales or Ireland,—not very often of Ireland. On the policy, right or wrong, applied to those numerous and extensive countries, any sweeper in the streets of Liverpool, any cab driver in London, may vote for or against the administration which governs those lands. We, the seven million people of Canada, cannot. We are as powerless as a babe in its mother's lap.

I have shown you the ludicrous position in which thousands of devoted Canadians of foreign birth can

be placed because of the limitations put upon our right of passing laws of naturalisation. Take now the position of another class of Canadian citizens. Take those thousands, hundreds of thousands of Canadians, born in Great Britain or Ireland. Most of them have left the Old Country and come to Canada because they thought they could improve their individual or social condition. Had they lived in the Old Country as tenants of Lord So-and-So, paying rent after three, four or ten generations, and transmitting to the following generations no other right than that of paying rent, they would at least have remained Imperial citizens in the full sense of the word. But having come to Canada, having sacrificed the natural love which every man has for his native land, having come to this country because they could not find a living in the Old Country, having come here to extend the glories and power of the British Empire, and help us in making Canada the jewel of the British crown, they have been rewarded by losing their Imperial citizenship! Under the existing condition of things, they may live and prosper, and help with all their might the development of this great Empire; but they have less word to say, in law and in fact, over the policy which governs that Empire, than they would have had, had they remained in the Old Country, either as land tenants, or even as gentlemen's valets.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Let us consider now the vast question of foreign affairs. We hear much of the services rendered to us by the foreign department of the British government. I stand here in a strange position. At a certain period of my public life, I was the only member of the Canadian Parliament, who dared say that, after all, on the whole, British diplomacy had done all it could do for us. I remember the time when I was an object of scandal in this very loyal Toronto, not because of my "disloyal" utterances, but because I ventured to say that, in the main, Lord Alverstone's decision on the Alaska boundary was not so bad after all.

But having rendered due testimony to the dignity, the continuance in action, the magnificent traditions of British diplomacy, here again I claim the right to judge the result of that diplomacy from the point of view of a loyal but true Canadian. We hear that one of the reasons for which we should put our hands in our pockets, and throw plenty of money in the coffers of the British government, is because of the protection given to our mercantile navy by the British fleet. I told you a moment ago that we had no mercantile navy, that the British government prevents us from having any. They keep control over it; therefore they should defend it. But of that later on.

The point I want to examine first is, how has British diplomacy acted in the interest of our trade? How is it that, not longer ago than in 1907, when the representative of the United States at the Hague Conference, Mr. Choate, proposed to have a declaration made and agreed to by all the maritime powers of the world, that in case of war, the private property of the belligerent nations should be exempt from seizure on sea—how is it that the first to stand against that proposal were the representatives of the British government? Without consulting the interests of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, simply because they thought that the British navy was powerful enough to continue with the old practice of piracy in time of war, the British representatives refused to accept the salutary proposal of the United States, and thereby let our trade exposed to plunder in time of war. I fail to know that, in those days, much sentiment was spent on "the solidarity of the sister nations". I fail to know that, in 1907, the representatives of the British Government consulted you or me. They have not consulted the Canadian government; they have consulted no representative of the Canadian people.

Now, let us see how British diplomacy has cared for us in other instances.

THE YELLOW PERIL.—THE "GERMAN MENACE"

Some weeks ago, I read in the newspapers of Canada that the brilliant, eloquent prime Minister of British Columbia claimed that the duty of the Canadian people was to look after the defence of the coasts of British Columbia, because in time of war they might be exposed to a raid from Japan. True; but I fail to know that when the British government made of Japan what she is today, when the British government, hypnotised with the long standing scare of a possible or imaginary aggression from Russia upon India, made of Japan the dominant power of the Pacific Ocean,—I fail to know that the British government ever thought of asking Sir Richard McBride what the results would be for the safety of British Columbia. I fail to know, that, in those days, there was, between British ministers and Canadian politicians, any talk of "solidarity between the Motherland and the daughter States".

We hear much of the German menace, these days. We are called upon to "stand shoulder to shoulder with the Old Country", in repulsing that true or imaginary peril. But if I read my history without any biased mind, what do I find? I find that, in 1864, Prussia was enabled to accomplish her raid over Denmark, seize the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein, and become for the first time a possible naval power on the Baltic and the North Sea, thanks to the indulgence given to that act of piracy by British statesmanship and British diplomacy. Two years later, when Prussia, having made an opening to the north, turned to the south and crushed Austria on the battlefield of Sadowa, who prevented any intervention from outside powers to stop the expanding domination of Prussia over the German Confederacy? If I read my history well, it was the French government of Napoleon III, and the English government. Four years later, the Prussian King put on his head the iron crown of Charlemagne in the empty palace of the French Kings at Versailles, and the German Empire was built up on the maimed body of France. Mr. Thiers started on his

pilgrimage from capital to capital in Europe, pointing out to the governments of the great nations, not the interest of France, but their own interest in preventing Germany from becoming the preponderating power in Europe. What was the answer? Italy was prepared to intervene, Russia also; but British statesmanship and British diplomacy prevented that intervention.

We hear now that Germany, with a France at a standstill in population, with a Russia maimed by Japan on the coast of Korea, is a menace to the safety of the British Empire. If today Germany is a real threat to British civilisation, it is largely the result of twenty-five years of British statesmanship and British policy.

I do not qualify those acts of statesmanship and policy: circumstances may have made them unavoidable. But surely, we are not responsible for the result. Have we been consulted? Appeals are now made to the French people of Quebec to stand by the Holy Alliance between Great Britain and France against Germany. I fail to know that forty years ago, when England was refusing her intervention to save France from the claws of Prussia, appeals were made to the French Canadians to stand in favour of the land of their ancestors.

So that, as you see, if we want to form a right opinion of what our situation is in that network of diplomacy, we should make a review of past history, and not attempt to settle this huge problem merely by appeals to sentiment or by a superficial view of present conditions. We should also have some regard for our own dignity, both as Canadians and British subjects.

RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

Now, as to Britain's dealings with the United States. I am one, I repeat, of the rare Canadians who believe that, on the whole, the British representatives have done the best they could for us in their relations with the United States. One of the most dangerous features of the wave of jingoism now passing over Canada, is to make the average Canadian believe that the power of

the British Empire is such, that any time we have a little feeling of hurt vanity with the United States, the whole British Empire should fall upon the Americans. As to the dispositions of the British authorities in this respect, allow me to give you the opinion, the thought opinion, of one who surely cannot be denounced either as a French demagogue or a "secessionist", and who stated that, "from 1868... down to the present hour"—that was in 1899—he had been "struck very forcibly with *the unwillingness on the part of Her Majesty's government to allow any circumstances whatever even to threaten a collision with the United States*".

Those words were uttered by Sir Charles Tupper, in the House of Commons, on the 22nd. of February 1899; and mind you, they were uttered before Great Britain renounced her rights in Nicaragua under the Bulwer-Clayton Treaty. They were uttered before the British authorities compromised those rights by consenting to the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, after having been duly put on their guard by the Minister of Justice of Canada, Mr. David Mills, who wrote in England that the British government should at least claim as a compensation the settlement of the Alaska boundary dispute. The British Ministers passed over, and consented to the new treaty without asking any compensation in Alaska. The result was Lord Alverstone's award, which, from a purely legal point of view, was the only one that could be given, because the British government had simply delivered their weapons to the American government. And now, the world is informed that, although the British government have protested against the further curtailment of their rights and ours by the Panama Canal Tolls Legislation, adopted by Congress, "of course, Great Britain would never go to war in support of her contention".

Now, mind you, I am not one of those who blame the British statesmen. I sincerely believe that a war between Great Britain and the United States would not only

be an unwise war, but an impossible one. In the circumstances under which the people of Britain and the people of the United States live, Great Britain could, I presume, strike tremendous blows at the finances and trade of the United States; but, even if victorious on all points of the ocean, even if successful in blockading every American port, Great Britain could never invade the territory of the United States and could never starve the American people; whilst a victorious England, blockading the ports of the United States, unable to stop the Americans from cutting communications between Western Canada and Europe, and from closing the Panama Canal, treaty or no treaty—we know what becomes of the letter of treaties in time of war—a victorious England, deprived at once of American and Canadian wheat, would be at the mercy of the American people before three months were over, because she would be starved to death. British statesmen are truly patriotic when they do all they can to avoid all difficulties with the American government.

But, as a Canadian, the conclusion I draw therefrom is this: If the British people, on account of their peculiar position, are unwilling or unable, or unwilling because unable, to stand by Canada against the United States,—the only country which can seriously threaten the peace and liberty of Canada,—I say, let us pause a little before we put upon our shoulders the burden of going and “protecting” Great Britain against Germany or other powers, whose relations with Great Britain have been framed by British Statesmen without any consultation with the people of Canada.

IMPERIAL RESPONSABILITIES

Whatever one's opinion may be as to the merits of the foreign policy of Great Britain during the last century, there is one point on which there can be not doubt. Whether good or bad, whether the result of bad statesmanship or of uncontrollable circumstances, that policy is entirely and exclusively in the hands of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs in Great Britain, respon-

sible to the people of Great Britain, and upon whom we have no control of any kind, direct or indirect. So long as that situation remains unaltered, so long as the people of Great Britain remain the sole possessors of the Empire, the sole masters of its foreign policy, the sole masters of its international relations, they should in justice and equity be solely responsible for the defence of the Empire, and maintain, at their own cost, their exclusive cost, the army and the navy which stand as the sanction of that foreign policy and in defence of that Empire.

It may be you do not agree with me; but in making that statement, I find myself in pretty good company. I find myself first of all in company with a man whose name, I suppose, will be well received here, in the company of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. I have fought constantly most of Mr. Chamberlain's ideas. But I have no fear of paying him this tribute of my admiration: he at least had enough courage, breadth of mind and sincerity to show his whole programme and not only part of it. He believed that we, Canadians, had kept enough of British pride—for my part, I have—never to consent to participate in the defence of the Empire without being given a voice in the government of the Empire. That is my first warranty. My second comes from one who, though he belonged to a different school of thought, expressed the same view in a very lucid form when he stated, at the opening of the Imperial Conference of 1907, that "*the cost of naval defence and the responsibility for the conduct of foreign affairs hang together*". This was Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

Coming to Canada, I will put my "disloyalty" under the guardship of three wise men. Here is an expression of opinion which does not differ much from that which seems to have scandalised you a moment ago:

"Under our constitution there is no obligation on the part of Canada, legally or constitutionally speaking, to contribute to the naval forces of the Empire; and that position will continue to exist so long as the United Kingdom alone has exclusive control of the foreign affairs of the Empire".

This was not uttered by a revolutionist; it was stated on the 24th. of February, 1910, by the gentleman occupying now the high position of Minister of Justice in the present Canadian government, Hon. Mr. Doherty.

"Responsibility for the Empire's defence upon the high seas..... has necessarily carried with it responsibility for and control of foreign policy".

This was stated on the 15th. of December 1912 by the present Prime Minister. Mr. Borden had expressed the same idea in a more concrete form, in England, when he warned the government and the people of Great Britain that "*Canada would never consent to be a mere adjunct even of the British Empire*". If contribution without representation, if help in the defence without any power in the control, is not to be an adjunct of the Empire I would like to know what it is.

Of course, one can always change the formula to satisfy one's self pride. Some years ago, in a more prosperous time, I owned part of a property in Montreal, containing a few houses to rent. There was one heating apparatus for the whole building. I had a very devoted, active and fussy stoker, to clean the apartments and heat the furnace. Every fall, when I purchased the supply of coal, he used to say : "Oh! dear, how much it costs us to keep *our* building up!" Well, gentlemen, at the present time, under the present terms of Imperial partnership, our right of control over "*our*" Empire is just about the size of the right of ownership which that "loyal" stoker had in "*our*" building. If we have some other rights, I would like to be pointed out what they are.

CANADIAN "SPONGERS"

One favorite argument of the propounders of both policies:—Canadian navy or contribution,—is that we are acting as "*spongers*"; that we are receiving gratuitously the help of Great Britain and doing nothing in return. At the risk of being tedious, I will again take the pre

caution of sheltering my views on this point under the cover of a very loyal authority:

"I deny that we are a burden to the Empire. I say that if to-morrow Canada was dissevered from the Crown of England, if to-morrow Canada became a portion of that great republic, which lies to the south of us, England could not reduce her army by a man or her navy by a ship. She would want more soldiers and sailors and ironclads than she has to-day in order to maintain her prestige. I say, if this great continent was closed, as closed it would be to the ships of England, under the circumstances I have named, if they had no harbour in which to run or a place where they can obtain a ton of coal or a spar, instead of England being strengthened, she would be enormously weakened. Her power in the Pacific, her possessions in India and China would be imperilled, and her prestige as a nation entirely changed. Instead of relieving her from any charge for diplomatic services, or her army or her navy, it would impose greater burdens upon the tax-payers of Great Britain than at present. I deny that we are a burden. There is not a pound of British money spent in the Dominion of Canada, from end to end, for any Canadian purpose".

These words were uttered by a gentleman acknowledged to be "loyal", honored by the confidence of the most "loyal" people of Canada; they were pronounced in Winnipeg, in 1893, by Sir Charles Tupper; they did not prevent him from becoming president of the British Empire League and Prime Minister of Canada. With those sentiments I agree entirely. The only difference is, I have not changed.

The people of Great Britain maintain their army and their navy, first, to keep the seas open in order to feed their people; second, to protect the Empire, over which we have no control whatever,—I mean India and the Crown Colonies; third, to uphold upon all seas their foreign policy over which we have not the slightest control or power of direction.

If these statements were challenged, I would be prepared to give all the quotations you wanted from numerous authorities, British and Canadian, Liberal and Conservative; but I think the proposition is too obvious to need the support of such evidence.

CANADA'S DEBT TO GREAT BRITAIN

Now, we are told that Great Britain has spent enormous sums of money for the defence of Canada, for our sake, and that, in gratitude, we should pay back part of it. Mr. Borden puts our indebtedness in that respect at some four hundred millions of dollars. If, as Canadians, we owe to Great Britain four hundred million dollars, by all means, let us pay four hundred million dollars! I do not want to compromise with Great Britain or any other country at the rate of ten cents on the dollar. But let us first examine the account. Surely, we, at least, French Canadians, ought not to be indebted to England because of the millions of pounds she spent in conquering us in 1759! At least, I ask to be granted leave not to pay my share of that debt. Again, as to the rebellion of 1774. It arose out of a quarrel between some Anglo-Saxons to the south of us and other Anglo-Saxons to the north of Europe, as to the way they were going to apportion their taxes. I do not feel that I have then, as a Canadian, incurred any share of debt to be paid either to the Yankees, or to the political heirs of George III, Lord North and Grenville. All I know is that, in those days, my great grand-father walked in the snow from Montreal to Quebec to bring despatches to Sir Guy Carleton, in besieged Quebec, while the few English merchants in the town had gone to the Island of Orleans to see who would be the victor, the English government or the American rebels. I think I have paid my share of that debt.

As to the war of 1812, I have heard of some dispute between the American government and the British government as to the right the British claimed of visiting every American boat, looking for deserters. I do not feel involved in that. Is there one gentleman here who claims that he stands in debt to Great Britain on account of a protracted war of two years between the United States and Great Britain, the cause of that war being that the British government, over which none of your ancestors had any control, persisted in exerci-

sing an insulting and piratical right of visiting foreign ships? We, Canadians, supported our share of burden in that struggle; we, French, fought at Chateauguay, as you did at Queenston's Heights ; but I have yet to learn that England has recouped us for the blood and money we then spent in her quarrel.

Half a century later, war was threatened again because of the *Trent* incident and the encouragement given by the British authorities to the numerous acts of piracy committed by the English corsair *Alabama*. We paid the piper. The treaty of reciprocity was broken—I do not cry for that;—but when the treaty of 1871 was negotiated in Washington, a Canadian statesman, Sir John A. Macdonald, who was not a rebel, a demagogue, or a secessionist, had to fight during three long months: fight whom? the American government? No, he had to fight the British ambassador and plenipotentiaries, so as to prevent them from giving the whole of Canada to the United States in order to recover the good-will of the American government. Read Sir John Macdonald's life, and you will see, in white and black, that some of the darkest days in his life, he passed there, in Washington, struggling for the preservation of Canadian nationality, struggling against the representatives of the British government for the maintenance of British institutions in Canada. Finally, he had to give to the Americans, for all time, freedom of access to our fisheries, because the British government did not want to pay out of their own money the consequences of their own deeds.

When, during the same period, the frontiers of Ontario and Quebec were attacked by Fenian raids from the United States, you and we stood the brunt of the trouble. Damages were committed in Canada. I fail to know that we were responsible for those damages; but no privileges on the coasts of England were given to Canadians as a compensation. We paid the whole of the damage to our own people, and the British government refused to demand any compensation from

the American government. There again, I fail to know that we have incurred a debt, which ought to be paid now in the proportion of—did I say ten cents?—no, nine cents in the dollar.

CANADA'S WEALTH, BRITAIN'S "POVERTY"

But, we are told, we have come to such a point of prosperity, and the poor people of England are reduced to such a state of poverty, that it is time we should act generously. Poor England! From 1854 to 1911, she paid off, from the process of her poverty, 340 million dollars of her public debt,—and this, in spite of the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny, the Soudan expedition, the Afghanistan expedition, the South African War, and a few other small difficulties here and there. From 1906 to 1911, in five years,—in that very period during which we are assured that the poor British people have been crushed under the burden of armaments,—they have found the means of paying off over 270 millions of their debt,—just about as much as the total amount of our national debt, and just eight times the alms we are going to give Great Britain to save her from starvation. The total annual revenue of the "poor" people of England on their invested capital,—not counting the reward of labour, trade and industry—the annual revenue on invested capital amounts to the humble figure of *two billions of pounds sterling* a year. Invested outside of the Kingdom, the "poor" British people had, in 1911, £3,750,000,000 or about \$18,000,000,000, out of which they derived, that year, £180,000,000, or somewhat less than *nine hundred millions of dollars*. That is about twenty-five times the amount of money we are going to give them this year. They cannot consume their revenue, they have to reinvest every year some surplus revenue. In the year 1911 alone, they re-invested, outside of England, £175,000,000 or about *eight hundred and sixty million dollars* of unused income. Poor England! Poor beggarly nation! Poor "weary Titan!"

Now, as regards taxation. I lay down this proposition, upon which I invite the searching criticism of every informed man: that, if we count together the taxation of our federal and provincial governments, *we the Canadian people, pay at the present time more taxes per head than the people of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales.* I defy contradiction on this point. Of course, if one compares only the amount paid by Great Britain for her navy and army, and the amount we spend on our militia, the difference is obviously against the British. But, I fail to know that the necessary works of peace which we have to perform, at a very high price, and for many generations, before we can reach the high point of development and civilisation which the British Isles have attained.—I fail to know that those works are not as necessary to Imperial construction as the maintenance of an army and a navy. In taking the means of uniting the various provinces of Canada into one country; in endeavouring to meet, at the same time, the requirements of the farmer of Western Canada and those of the manufacturer of Eastern Canada; in enabling both classes, by a thorough system of cheap and rapid transportation, to exchange their agricultural and industrial products, so as to take away from the minds of many Canadians the notion that they have to beg from their neighbours the means of living in this country,—is Canada not performing a work as necessary to the maintenance of British connection and the unity of the British Empire, as by placing a few Dreadnoughts in the North Sea or at Gibraltar?

We are informed that we cannot construct our great public works without the capital from England; and the fact that England has already some \$180,000,000 invested in Canada, is given as sufficient ground for gratitude on our part. Let us look into that argument. In reading this morning's papers, I saw that the Mayor of the City of Toronto has just secured in New York a loan which he could not get in London. On the basis of reasoning just mentioned, His Worship should im-

mediately wire to the Canadian Parliament to stop sending money to England and use the \$35,000,000 contribution to help the American navy, because you have secured a loan from New York. I have always understood that the British money-lender is a sharp business man, who puts his money where it pays him most, and whence he can derive the best revenue on the safest investment. Whether the investment is in Canada or in Germany, in the United States or in Japan, provided it is sound and remunerative, it is all alike to him. I would not advise the treasurer of the loyal city of Toronto to go to London and ask the Bank of England, or any money-lender on Lombard Street; for a preference of one tenth of one per cent on Toronto bonds because Toronto is so "loyal".

REAL DEBT OF GRATITUDE

This long chapter may have been a little hard for you to listen to. Let me now close by saying, with the same degree of sincerity, that just as I consider fallacious the basis upon which appeals are made to us at the present time for gratitude, for love, for contribution, I lay down as the inspiring principle of our national organisation that the people of Canada owe to British traditions, to British institutions, to the British system of government, a debt of gratitude that cannot be paid for in money or in ships. And that debt of gratitude, gentlemen, perhaps I feel it more than you do. But I claim that it ought not to be paid to the forty five millions of people living at the present time in the two British islands. That debt, for my part, I feel I owe it to the whole British race, I feel I owe it to all British institutions, I feel I owe it to the whole of British history. I do not agree that I should pay to Mr. Balfour or to Mr. Asquith, or even to King George V, what I owe to the barons who exacted the Magna Charta from King John, what I owe to those generations of Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen and Welshmen, who, for centuries, fought to secure for the masses of England the

right of full citizenship. I claim that the best way we can show our gratitude is to prove to the British people that we have not degenerated, that we have, in that British citizenship, the same pride which they have had for centuries. And when I hear from the Prime Minister of England that the powers of Imperial authority, that the powers over the army and the navy, that the powers over foreign affairs, that the powers of the government of the Empire, "**CANNOT BE SHARED**" with the colonies, I reply: As long as you cannot share them, I cannot pay you, and I won't do it, willingly.

We are now told that the British authorities have changed their mind, and that, as an evidence of their good-will, they are going to give us representation on the Imperial Defence Committee. Let us hear on that point the views of the British government. Here is the language used, by the Colonial Minister, Mr. Harcourt, in a despatch lately laid on the table of the House of Commons at Ottawa, explaining on what basis we are going to get that magnificent representation:

"We [the British ministers] pointed out to him [Mr. Borden] that the Committee of Imperial Defence is a purely advisory body, and is not and cannot, under any circumstances, become a body deciding on policy, which is and must remain the sole prerogative of the [British] Cabinet, subject to the support of the House of Commons [of Great Britain and Ireland]."

And he adds :

"The foregoing accurately represents the views and intentions of His Majesty's Government".

I do not say that those views are right or wrong; I do not say that the British Ministers can or cannot share their powers; but I claim that the people of this country are being deceived when they are told of Imperial solidarity, of Imperial citizenship, of Imperial representation; and I lay down this principle that, so long as the British authorities do not recede from that haughty attitude, so long as the people of the United Kingdom do not or cannot offer to the people of Canada real

terms of partnership, it is beneath our dignity as a British community to contribute one cent directly or indirectly, regularly or spasmodically, to imperial armaments. I do not know whether this is right or wrong; but it is good British doctrine, based on British history.

CANADA'S FUTURE

I have spoken quite plainly as to the present. As regards the future, I will give you my sincere thought in the same manner. It would be better for all, for Canada and the Empire, to go gradually along the lines that have been adopted by the wisest men in the history of the Empire, as the only ground upon which it is possible to secure harmony and free co-operation between the Motherland and the Colonies. As long as we remain in that state, we should do and fulfil our duty in the maintenance of the Empire by organising in a practical manner the defence of that portion of the Empire over which we have control. It is both undignified and foolish for us, at the present time, to go and help in the maintenance of a navy over which we have no control, when we have not yet taken the elementary precautions to make this part of the Empire safe. Sixteen years ago, the Imperial Defence Committee told us that we should organise the defence of our harbours, shores and land frontiers; and we have not yet spent one cent on home protection. Three years ago, Gen. French came here and told us, in as polite a language as an English gentleman can use, that our militia would be absolutely inoperative in time of war; and yet, it is still in the same situation.

As to our national destiny, it is for the Canadian people to decide. If a new solution is forced upon us,—and forced it will be the moment we abandon the safe path we have followed to the present time, forced the moment we begin to contribute; because I believe you have preserved enough of your British traditions, of British pride, that it will not be from Quebec, but from Toronto and Ontario, that will start the first voice

to demand representation, if there is any such thing as contribution;—if an issue is forced upon us, my personal sentiments are well known. The gradual development of autonomy, till we reach the point where we can be an independent nation, a friendly ally of Great Britain and France, the two nations with which the people of our country are most naturally connected, would be, in my mind, the highest ideal that could be looked for by the Canadian people. But if the majority of the people in Canada, whether of English or French descent, choose to stick with the Empire, I am ready to abide by the decision. If the people of Canada choose to enter into closer partnership with the people of the British Isles, again I say, when the people of Canada have spoken on that point, there will be no portion of the Canadian people more ready to abide by the decision than the people of Quebec, even the "bad" Nationalists. We have never concealed our views in that respect. All we ask is that the whole people should be consulted and speak freely. If we have Imperial partnership, all right; but let it be true Imperial partnership, based on a fair apportionment of power and responsibility, and not partnership to be exercised only by the assumption of new obligations on the part of Canada.

The formula, I am afraid, is pretty far distant, which will give acknowledgement to that principle of justice. When invented and put into practice,—if ever it is—I do not think it would be possible of duration; yet I would ten times rather have full Imperial partnership and real Imperial Federation, than the two low, undignified solutions now offered to us by the two political parties of Canada; because, those two solutions, one under one form and the other under the other form, both scent of tribute, they both mean that the Canadian people... (A voice : "Willingly!")

True, willingly. There are two means of paying the tribute: one is by being reduced into subjection, the other, by doing it voluntarily—but they both mean that

we pay for something we cannot control, that we contribute to the support of a navy which remains, under the terms dictated by Mr. Asquith or Mr. Harcourt, the sole property of the people of the British Isles, to be administered by them, for their ends, and in support of their policy. This I claim to be not so much against our traditions as Canadians, as against the principle of British citizenship. Not as a Frenchman, but as a British subject, I will only submit to it when I have clear proof that the Canadian people are willing to go down to that degree of subjection. Till that is done, I believe the best service that can be rendered to the Empire is to discuss this question freely, frankly, openly. I am prepared myself to stand as patiently as you have done to me, to the most imperialistic address, to the noisiest jingo appeal, because, when spoken from the heart, with proper arguments, it is from the clash of these ideas that truth will emerge. Right thinking Canadians will find a solution, providing it is in liberty, in frankness and in equality of rights.

